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Chile

Human Rights Issue

3.3(b)(1)

The Chilean Foreign Ministry appears to be making a bid to urge the ruling military junta to alter the public face of its policies if it wants better relations with the US. Other Chilean civilian and military officials reportedly are increasingly interested in efforts to improve the nation's image abroad.

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Foreign Minister Carvajal has approved a strategy paper stressing the importance of seeking a negotiated solution with Washington on the human rights issue.

Although the Foreign Ministry document discusses the option of rejecting US policy as interventionist, its recommendation suggests that a fundamental normalization of relations depends on a Chilean government decision to relax its emergency powers.

Resentment remains strong within the

(See Chile. . .Page 4)

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OAS: General Assembly to Convene

The human rights issue is certain to be the major topic of discussion when the seventh General Assembly of the Organization of American States convenes in Grenada tomorrow. None of the participants, however, seems anxious for divisive debate on the issue.

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Most delegates are interested in meeting Secretary of State Vance and hope to gain insight into the US Administration's policy toward Latin America and its ideas for restructuring the OAS. The majority of Latin American officials have had little contact with high-level US officials; in general, the Latin Americans are confused by what they perceive as conflicting signals from the US.

The human rights issue is the core of the problem. There have been reports that the southern cone countries—Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil—have been attempting to form a common front in opposition to the US on this issue. None of the countries is anxious to offend the US, however, and protestations against Washington's human rights policy will probably be perfunctory but emotional.

Other topics on the agenda of the General Assembly include restructuring the OAS, charter reform, cooperation on development, collective economic security, and educational and cultural exchange programs. Bolivia's desire for an outlet to the sea and the dispute between Guatemala and Belize may be raised, but only statements for the record on these topics are expected. Panama may bring up the canal treaty talks; no joint US-Panama report on the status of the talks seems likely before the meeting.

As it shapes up now, the General Assembly could bog down on human rights discussions, but none of the participants seems anxious for a rankling debate. Most delegates, in fact, want to get the Grenada meeting over with as quickly as possible.

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Chile. . .

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Chilean government toward US human rights policy, and hardliners can be expected to press their arguments against any concessions. Nevertheless, the apparent failure of Chilean efforts to convene a summit meeting to forge a joint human rights strategy among southern cone nations may have provoked sober reflection in Santiago.

In any case, moderates in the government may hope to convince President Pinochet that easing present security restrictions would go a long way toward improving Chile's image and restoring much-needed economic assistance from abroad. 3.3(b)(1)

[redacted] sentiment for gestures to improve Chile's international image has grown among leading military and government officials, including some in the army. While Pinochet's position does not appear threatened, he may decide that gradual liberalization is imperative if he is to retain the full support of key armed forces leaders.

Meanwhile, September 11, the fourth anniversary of the military coup, is being mentioned frequently as an appropriate time to announce important political steps. [redacted] 3.5(c)

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